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C O N F I D E N T I A L DJIBOUTI 001659

SIPDIS

FOR IO/UNP, PMAT, PM/RSAT

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [DJ](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI: EMBASSY VIEWS ON UNSC RESOLUTION ON IRAQ

REF: STATE 256573

Classified By: ADCM Haywood Rankin for reason 1.5 (b,d).

1. (C) The UNSC resolution outlined in reftel would not bother Djibouti, so long as there were not strong Arab or European opposition to it. Djibouti does not want to be seen leading any charge on Iraq, but it will not be a negative force. It is small, poor, and in Arab League terms, peripheral. It is also more exposed than ever, with an American base on its soil now, in addition to the French garrison.

2. (C) Djibouti particularly does not want to get out in front of Arab states on Arab issues, as it does not want to annoy rich and powerful Arab patrons. Nor does it want to go out of its way to pick a fight with France, however tetchy it often feels in its relationship with its former colonial master and present protector.

3. (C) That said, Djibouti has no ax to grind on Iraq. Moreover, it is likely to see great potential benefits from the U.S. if it were to accede to our wishes on a subject of such great importance to us. The Djibouti leadership finds itself caught between a rock and a hard place, and we have intermittent signs that it may still be considering the idea of some sort of very low-level military participation in Iraq.
SMITH